

## SENATE RESOLUTION 260

By Berke

A RESOLUTION to recognize Dr. Virgil Caldwell on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are especially pleased to recognize those individuals who have answered a divine call to the ministry and who have served with dedication, vigor, and enthusiasm over the years to perform God's work for their congregations and their communities; and

WHEREAS, one such dedicated evangelist is Dr. Virgil Caldwell, who for more than forty years has provided guidance and spiritual inspiration to his fellow man as the pastor at New Monumental Baptist Church in Chattanooga; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Caldwell will be taking a much deserved retirement at the end of December of 2008; he has performed his religious duties with extraordinary ability and unprecedented devotion, giving unselfishly of himself, his time, and his talents for his faith and the greater good of the New Monumental congregation; and

WHEREAS, after a military stint in Korea and graduating from Lane College, Dr. Caldwell taught social studies, choir, and band in Union City while he continued his academic pursuits, receiving his master's degree from the Teachers College at Columbia University in 1957; and

WHEREAS, in 1960, Reverend Caldwell first accepted his higher calling into the ministry as a pastor at First Baptist Church of Dresden, where he shepherded the flock until he was called to be the pastor of Woodlawn Baptist Church in Brownsville, a church where his father once preached, in 1964; in 1968, he was called to be the pastor at New Monumental Baptist, where he has been a powerful and positive influence for the past forty years; and

WHEREAS, during his pastoral career, Dr. Caldwell furthered his theological studies by attending an extension school at A.B.T. Seminary, summer sessions at Memphis Theological

Seminary, and Vanderbilt Divinity School before receiving the Doctor of Ministry degree from Luther Rice Seminary; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Caldwell has performed his duties with compassion and dexterity; his ability and spirituality have earned him the respect of his peers and Congregationalists alike for the superior quality of his humble Christian service and the depth and sincerity of his faith and should serve as benchmarks for other pastors to emulate; and

WHEREAS, deeply committed to involvement on a global level, Dr. Caldwell has traveled to some of the world's leading cities in Europe, Asia, and Africa, citing his 1975 trip to the Holy Land and preaching in Liberia, Africa as two of his most gratifying experiences; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his remarkably diverse pastoral duties, Reverend Caldwell has also served as moderator of the Chattanooga District Association and President of the Tennessee BM&E Convention and is a former writer of Sunday School literature; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Caldwell also contributes his time to bringing the word of the Lord to incarcerated individuals through a prison ministry; and

WHEREAS, Virgil Caldwell is deeply devoted to his family and always endeavors to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he is most grateful for the love and partnership in ministry he shares with his wife, Rubye, and is the proud father of Cedric Julius, Victor Whitmore, Scottie Beatrice, and Christy Greta; he is also the grandfather of nine; and

WHEREAS, fulfilling his God-given mission by sharing and living according to spiritual principles, Reverend Virgil Caldwell's labors in the Vineyards of the Lord have borne much fruit and are worthy of celebration; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we join with his family, friends, and members of New Monumental Baptist Church in honoring Reverend Virgil Caldwell for forty years of dedicated and dynamic Christian ministry, and extend to him our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.